

**Santa Clara County Office of the Sheriff**  
**Trail Cameras**  
**Annual Surveillance Report: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023**

**1. Description of How the Technology Was Used**

The primary objective of the trail cameras is to monitor illegal or suspected illegal activity on private or public lands in the course of criminal investigations. The Office of the Sheriff did not utilize the trail cameras during this reporting period due to diminished staffing in the units that primarily utilize this equipment and the fact that this equipment was not needed for the types of investigations conducted.

**2. Data Sharing with Outside Entities**

During this reporting period, the trail cameras were not deployed for any criminal investigations and therefore, no data was obtained nor shared with outside entities.

**3. Community Complaints or Concerns**

Any community complaints regarding the use of the trail cameras are routed to the Internal Affairs Lieutenant for tracking and response. There were no community complaints or concerns expressed to the Office of the Sheriff regarding the use of trail cameras during this reporting period.

**4. Non-Privileged Internal Audits / Policy Violations**

All Office of the Sheriff staff are provided all Surveillance Use Policies via an internal web-based portal requiring annual review and attestation of acknowledgement completion. Specialized unit supervisors are required to monitor and periodically audit the data obtained by and the use of the trail cameras to ensure compliance with the Surveillance Use Policy and other department policies. Audits confirmed there is no data saved on the trail cameras and there were no violations of policy during this reporting period as the technology was not deployed.

**5. Effectiveness in Achieving its Identified Purpose**

The identified purpose of the trail cameras has proven to be an effective form of capturing evidence of illicit activity that is helpful for Sheriff's Deputies when conducting criminal investigations. The Office of the Sheriff still considers this equipment vital and effective in obtaining best evidence in criminal investigations, especially in cases of illegal marijuana cultivation operations in rural public and private lands. Recent environmental factors such as the aftermath of the SCU Lightning Complex wildfire and the statewide drought significantly diminished the amount of rural public and private land illegal marijuana cultivation operations during this reporting period. The illegal marijuana cultivation operations that were investigated

by the Office of the Sheriff during this reporting period did not require the use of the trail cameras.

## **6. Public Records Act Requests**

The Office of the Sheriff has a process in place to track California Public Records Act (CPRA) requests with designated staff assigned to receive and respond to each request. The Office of the Sheriff did not receive any California Public Records Act requests for the data from the trail cameras during this reporting period.

## **7. Annual Costs**

The purchase of the trail cameras was a one-time purchase before this reporting period. There were no associated costs for the trail cameras during this reporting period due to non-use. The only associated costs for the trail cameras would have been for the batteries required to power the cameras should the trail camera have been deployed.